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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Vladimir Putin of the
Russian Federation (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Andrew Card, Assistant to the President and
Chief of Staff
Condoleezza Rice, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Daniel Fried, Special Assistant to the
President and Senior Director for European
and Eurasian Affairs, NSC (notetaker)
Peter Afanassenko, Interpreter

President Vladimir Putin
Sergey Ivanov, Minister of Defense
Aleksey Korzhuev, Interpreter

DATE, TIME September 26, 2003, 5:15 - 6:00 p.m., EDT
AND PLACE: President's Cabin, Camp David

The President: Let me raise something. We intercepted some HEU
in Georgia, and we want to work with you to analyze where it
came from. We will give you samples and all information about
it. ~~(S)~~

President Putin: I don't know about this issue. Where was its
origin? ~~(S)~~

The President: I'm not sure. It seems to me it was a sample,
just sample, but we have the fear that this guy was going to
sell it to Arab terrorists. ~~(S)~~

President Putin: When did this take place? ~~(S)~~

The President: In late June. But we just got the materials.
It happened in June. The Georgians apprehended him, but they

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Reason: 1.5(d)

approached us only in August. We will give you all the information. We know the guy, but not where he is now. (S)

President Putin: We can trace the sources of this material. (S)

The President: That's why we want you to have it. (S)

President Putin: We can make an analysis and trace it back. (S)

The President: This could be the beginning of a larger issue. The Georgians let the guy go, which was foolish, but they let us know about him and the uranium, which was good. (S)

President Putin: Sure, they let him go: he gave them money. (S)

The President: We can work this together. Condi will brief Sergey. (S)

Another thing; we captured Abu Atiya, the Pankisi killer. (S)

President Putin: I know. (S)

The President: We'll share this information, too; we'll share whatever we get from him. We're interrogating him now. (S)

President Putin: We have a lot of information about him. (S)

The President: How did your visit go with Crown Prince Abdallah? (S)

President Putin: He's a bit complicated. He talks only a little; he is not direct. But we can understand his way of thinking. For example, he believes the situation in Iraq will improve only when the United States and Great Britain leave. (S)

The President: He's wrong. We'll leave, though. He also worries about the Shia. Did you talk about terrorism and terrorist financing with him? (S)

President Putin: I told him everything. (S)

The President: He needed to hear it. (S)

President Putin: He spoke about how he hates extremists and extreme Wahabiists. He was harsh. But his aides told us not to share any of that. (S)

The President: He changed his tune after the Riyadh bombing. Now he realizes that the terrorists want to kill him. He can't control the money coming out of his own family, so he has a self interest in anti-terrorism. (S)

President Putin: I don't know what he wants, but I told him what we think about what is happening. (S)

The President: He's smart. (S)

President Putin: Sure, but not smart enough. Or he should apply his intelligence in an appropriate way. (S)

The President: There were some signs that [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] That is dangerous. (S)

President Putin: Exactly. The situation is complicated. (S)

The President: We don't want to overthrow them or see them overthrown. He's the best there is there. (S)

President Putin: They have different views. They think that Americans will look for young and promising princes to support. They are under strain, I think. But we should not pretend to be satisfied with the regime in Saudi Arabia. It is simply not possible to turn a blind eye to what is happening. (S)

The President: I'm worried about their hypocrisy. They don't work, but spend billions. They spent \$1 billion for a one month trip to Spain for King Fahd. One month in Spain, \$1 billion. The danger is that they will be overthrown by Wahabbists, and then you and we have a problem. If you think we have a problem now, just wait. They think that the Jews in the American press are out to get them. He's got to realize that the fact that 18 of the 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia is a problem. He's got a problem now. (S)

President Putin: Those who are fighting against Russians are being financed from Saudi Arabia. (S)

The President: You told him that? (S)

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President Putin: Yes. ~~(S)~~

The President: Did he say he would stop it? ~~(S)~~

President Putin: He can't control it, he said. But he said he will get better control over some of the funds in his country.

~~(S)~~

I met with Chirac and Schroeder in New York. I told them that in principle we must remain realistic. Extreme positions on Iraq are not possible. Just saying that the U.K. and United States must leave is not realistic. Second, we must take into account the danger of a vacuum of power in Iraq, like in Chechnya. If you leave now, there will be a vacuum for sure.
(C)

The President: I had a good meeting with Schroeder. ~~(S)~~

President Putin: (to his interpreter). The gift. (U)

Now he is going to get lost. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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